

BOOK REVIEW

Sangitaratnakara of Sarangadeva — Marathi translation. Part I. Chapters 1-4 by G.H. Taralekar. (Sahitya ani Sanskrit Mandal, Govt. of Maharashtra, 1975). pp. xv+513+viii. Price. Rs. 29/-.

The *Ratnakara* indubitably occupies an extremely significant place in the music history of India. On the one side, many scholars are of the opinion that it is the last important work of the 'pre-Muslim' period. But to me it is a notable milestone because (1) it is one of the last great works of the *murcchana* period and (2) it very clearly and often gives data on local forms of contemporary musical practices and does not merely quote from earlier texts. Whether, there is any such thing as 'Muslim' music and what came to India during pre-medieval and medieval times was 'Muslim' music is a subject we need not discuss here.

The greatness of the *Ratnakara* being what it is, the work has been studied and commented upon by a number of scholars, the best known being those of Kallinatha and Simhabhupala.

There are also translations into our regional languages as well as into English. C. Kunhan Raja's English translation of the first few chapters was published in Adyar; apart from being incomplete, the translator's lack of knowledge of music made the translation quite a confusing one. The Sangit Karyalaya, Hathras also brought out a translation — again only the first few chapters — into Hindi. The Andhra Pradesh Sangit Natak Akademi commenced a translations into Telugu and published it in series. The Mysore University also published a Kannada translation — again of a part by R. Satyanarayana, along with his commentary, *Nissanka hrdaya*. Perhaps, this is the first major work, after the present writer's review-article in the *Bull. Decc. College Research Institute*, to attempt a relation between today's scientific concepts to those of the *Ratnakara*: (Of course, there may be other translations that this reviewer is not aware of).

The volume under review is a translation into Marathi. The translator has not only given the original text in Sanskrit and its Marathi version, but also the Marathi translations of Kallinatha's *Kalanidhi*.

Besides these, Taralekar has also given detailed commentary throughout. He has referred to earlier editions by Vedanta Vagisa, Krishnacharya and

others as well as to various commentaries. As such, this is a thorough study and has been well done. The present translation bases itself mainly on the Adyar edition in Samskrit and this volume covers: *padartha sangraha*, *pindotpatti*, *nad-sthan*, *sruti-svara*, *grama-murchhana*, *tana*, *sadharana*, *varnalankara*, *jati*, *giti*, *raga*, *raganga*, *prakirnaka*, and *prabandha*.

The translator could have commented on some significant points. For instance, *Adhy. I. Pr. 3 v. 7*, Sarangadeva talks of three registers, each being double the previous. How double? The answer may throw much light on our organological history. Again, *v. ii.* in the same chapter is a statement on difference limen of pitch. Here, the translator gives an interesting cross reference to Visvavasu (p. 58).

Taralekar also provides tables for working out *svara prastara*, *sruti*, *suddha-vikrta* notes, *gramamurcchana* and *jati*.

With various cross references and commentaries, this is a good work; and both the author as well as the publishers deserve our thanks, for translation of our major classics both in Sanskrit and other languages into current ones are very necessary.

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